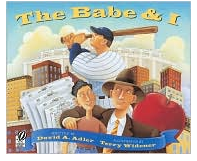
**Susan Allen’s Picks**



**The Babe and I**

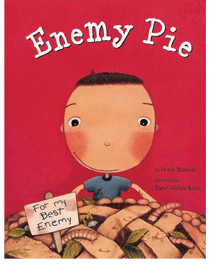
Written by David Adler

Illustrated by Terry Widener

Gulliver Books, Harcourt Brace and Company, New York, NY 1999

Ages 5-8

This story takes place in the Bronx during the depression. A young boy wakes up on his birthday and is disappointed when his only birthday gift is a small sum of change. His disappointment is soon overshadowed when he realizes that his dad, despite leaving the house dressed and with his briefcase every day, has lost his job. He discovers his father has resorted to selling apples on the street to help make ends meet for the family. The young boy becomes a “newsie” selling newspapers to help with the family finances. He and a friend discover it is easier to sell newspapers shouting out positive news; headlines about Ruth’s homerun streak. He eventually sells a newspaper to The Babe himself and has a chance to attend a Yankee’s game. In addition to being a sports themed book, this story highlights the relationship between the boy and his father and how important it is for families to stick together during tough times. It is a good book to share with children in these economic times as it can share a lesson of compassion for individuals and families undergoing serious issues such as unemployment.



**Enemy Pie**

By Derek Munson

Illustrated by Tara Callahan King

Chronicle Books, Vancouver, BC 2000

Theme: Friendship

Ages 5-8

The young main character in the story is having the “best summer ever” until his one and only enemy moves into his neighborhood. Convinced he must do something about this situation he asks for help from his father who come up with a solution: enemy pie. The one condition for this solution to work is the young boy must spend a day with his enemy. After spending time together the two get along and he finds out that his enemy “wasn’t being a very good enemy” at all! This is a great story to teach young children the value in extending oneself to make a new friend. It can serve to teach them that having pre-conceived notions about peers they do not know well can prevent them from valuable friendships. It would be a good story to share at the beginning of the new school year. The illustrations draw the reader in and convey the changing emotions on the faces of the characters as their friendship develops.



Go Away Big Green Monster

Ed Emberly

Little Brown & Company, 1992

Theme: Overcoming Fears

Ages 2-6

By flipping brightly colored die-cut pages, young readers are able to build a “scary” monster and then disassemble him right before their eyes! Although it doesn’t have a strong plot line the story uses commands such as “You Don’t Scare Me” to empower children who may be struggling with fears. It is a good choice for early readers to read on their own. Young children become part of the action as they gain control over the “monster”. It is a personal favorite of mine as it was used several times to overcome my own children’s bedtime fears!